



## The Aruba Reef Care Project 2006 successfully cleans the beaches and shores

For the 13<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, hundreds hit Aruba's beaches not to lie in the sun, but to clean the debris and refuse that accumulates on them above and below the waters. The Aruba Reef Care Project, organized by Castro Perez of the Aruba Tourism Authority and sponsored by the ATA and RBTT bank saw 400 volunteers work both Saturday and Sunday morning to preserve the beauty of Aruba's shores.

Joining the beach cleaners were SCUBA divers taking care of the underwater world, supervised by SEAruba Fly n' Dive and Unique Sports of Aruba. Castro Perez reports that thousands of sacks of refuse were carted away by the volunteered services and waste bins of Eco Tech.

A number of hotels provided box lunches, and various agencies provided refreshments. This year headquarters for the cleaning effort were located at the Neptali Henriquez Park, where everyone gathered on Sunday at noon for the traditional raffle. Many participants were happy to be rewarded by winning dinners for two donated by various restaurants, excursions and even a weekend stay at the Renaissance. Castro Perez awarded the certificates for participation, and a great deal of praise for his zone captains for making the cleaning effort such a success.

The Aruba Reef Care Project was originally organized to clean the reefs of the island, which during the first year were found to be full of tangled fishing line and other debris. Since that first year, there has been little for divers to find, so the project expanded to include some beaches, and eventually grew to cover nearly every beach on the island from Arashi to Baby Beach. It is a resounding success every year, and the volunteers should be well satisfied with their efforts. They and Castro Perez deserve heartfelt thanks for their hard work in the hot sun to keep our beaches clean!